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STATE FOR NEA/ARP, EB/ESC/TFS, TREASURY FOR U/S LEVEY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/06/2016
TAGS: [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [KU](#) [KTFN](#)
SUBJECT: GOK INVESTIGATION OF REVIVAL OF THE ISLAMIC
HERITAGE SOCIETY UNDERWAY

REF: A. KUWAIT 1687
[1](#)B. STATE 25359

Classified By: CDA Matthew Tueller. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. Summary: During separate meetings with Econoff on June 5 and 6, senior GOK officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Social Affairs and Labor pointed to ongoing GOK efforts to investigate the activities of the Revival of the Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS); promised an official GOK response to the USG RIHS paper; and welcomed receiving any additional information available to the USG about RIHS activities in support of terrorism. End summary.

MFA Investigating; Report Due Soon

[1](#)2. (S/NF) On June 5 and 6, Econoff, in follow-up to Treasury Under Secretary Stuart Levey's April 29 visit (ref A), met separately with Ambassador Khaled Al-Maqamis, Director of Follow-up and Coordination (TF lead) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Naser Al-Ammar, Director of Charity Oversight at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MOSAL) for an update on GOK efforts to investigate the activities of RIHS.

[1](#)3. (S/NF) Without going into details, Al-Maqamis acknowledged ongoing MFA efforts to investigate RIHS branch offices abroad. He added that the MFA would soon respond to the USG paper based on its findings. He pointed to long-standing MFA mechanisms intended to ensure compliance by charities abroad and reaffirmed the GOK's commitment to fighting terrorism. He dismissed any suspicions of Kuwaiti support to terrorism and encouraged closer dialogue and coordination with the USG on Islamic charity oversight in order to protect America's image in the Muslim world.

MOSAL Awaiting MFA Instructions

[1](#)4. (S/NF) Al-Ammar said that following U/S Levey's visit, his office submitted a report to MOSAL Minister Shaykh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, at the latter's request, detailing RIHS' organizational structure and activities, including past violations tied to unauthorized donation kiosks. According to Al-Ammar, RIHS offices in Kuwait are no longer in violation of existing regulations.

[1](#)5. (S/NF) Al-Ammar explained that he has been coordinating his efforts closely with Al-Maqamis and his staff, who are the lead GOK investigative authority on Kuwaiti charities abroad. According to Al-Ammar, the MFA has instructed MOSAL to await the results of its investigation before taking any

further steps. He added that MOSAL is prepared to take any necessary punitive measures, including fines, license revocation, and/or closure, if instructed to do so by the MFA. Al-Ammar said he found the USG RIHS paper to be very informative and he welcomed any additional information on RIHS activities that could be used to inform MOSAL's efforts.

Comment

¶6. (S/NF) The GOK's ability to investigate the overseas activities of RIHS is very limited, but the effort to do so represents a positive step. We recommend that a releasable version of the most recent Treasury report on RIHS be passed to the GOK as soon as possible in order to give added momentum to the steps being taken to exert greater oversight of overseas branches of charities. The GOK's investigative efforts stand to benefit greatly from information available in the report.

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